Research Activity Panel Meeting Summary
Chris Harrold, Monterey Bay Aquarium, RAP Chair

JULY 2002 RAP MEETING

Host: Monterey Bay Aquarium
Friday, July 12, 2002 9am-12pm

In Attendance:
Members
Chris Harrold, Monterey Bay Aquarium – Chair
Jeff Paduan, Naval Postgraduate School – Vice Chair
Andrew DeVogelaere – RAP Coordinator
Greg Cailliet, MLML
Churchill Grimes, NMFS
Randy Kochevar, MBA
Francisco Chavez, MBARI
Mark Stephenson, CDFG
Kerstin Wasson, ESNERR
Jim Harvey, MLML
Aaron King, MPA Center
Gary Sharp, CCORS

Guests
Erica Burton, MBNMS
Kelly Newton, MBNMS
Sean Morton, MBNMS
Deirdre Hall, MBNMS
Rachel Saunders, MBNMS
Roger Bland, SFSU
Michael Hoffman, SFSU
Jenny Carless
Sarah Lyons, MPA Center
Lydia Bergen, UCSC
Caroline Steve +1, Hopkins/New England Aquarium
Renee Davis-Borne, PISCO/OSU
Roxanne Jordan
Daphne, MPA Center

PRESENTATIONS

Institutional Update: Monterey Bay Aquarium (Chris Harrold & Randy Kochevar)

Chris Harrold: Sea Otter Research and Conservation
The Sea Otter Research and Conservation (SORAC) program has outgrown its current location at the Monterey Bay Aquarium and has been looking for a new location. Six potential sites have been review, with the most likely site being the University of California Santa Cruz Marine Campus. The population of the Southern Sea Otter is still in trouble due to several reasons including mortality in prime age animals, and a relatively high proportion of diseased animals. A better understanding of the threats that otters face, and a well designed captive management strategy are necessary for sustaining their population. Also needed is leadership among agencies, conservation groups and NGO's; better coordination; and facilitation. The mission of the MBA Sea Otter Center is to save the Southern Sea Otter. There are eight goals identified for the center including research with captive otters, public awareness, improved rehabilitation, and support exhibits and interpretation. The new center maybe located next to the California Department of Fish and Game's Oil Spill Prevention and Response office on the UCSC marine campus, pending MBA Board approval. There are many advantages of this location including strong academic affiliation, existing seawater system, streamlined project management, and public access and interpretation at the Seymour Discovery Center. Collaborators on this project include UCSC, USGS, and USFWS.

Randy Kochevar: Tagging of Pacific Pelagics
The Census of Marine Life Pilot Project wants to answer three questions: what lived in the ocean, what lives in the ocean, what will live in the ocean? Tagging of Pacific Pelagics (TOPP) is a project within the Census of Marine Life, and is taking a top down approach and studying top of the food chain animals such as Albatross, Elephant Seals, Tunas, and Leatherback Turtles. The objectives of the project are to understand how different marine species utilize the ocean environment. The approach of the project is to tag apex predators and to merge the data with physical, biological, and oceanographic data. Different types of tags are used including external satellite tags and internal archival tags.

Acoustic Monitoring at Pioneer Seamount (Roger Bland)

Dr. Roger Bland studies ocean noises, specifically from Pioneer Seamount, at San Francisco State University. The Pioneer Seamount is home to the old ATOC cable and array, but is now only a receiver. The array consists of 4 hydrophones. The cable comes ashore at Pillar Point and the data is sent to PMEL in Oregon, then to San Francisco State University to be archived on the web. The array picks up sounds such as ships, earthquakes, landslides, and whales. The loudest sound in the ocean comes from ships. The program would like to work more on blue whales sound identification and travel. One goal of the project is to census whales in the region and possibly place a separate array in a location that would allow for the determining of whale locations.
More information can be found at http://www.physics.sfsu.edu/~seamount

Davidson Seamount (Andrew DeVogelaere)

The Davidson Seamount is located just outside the Sanctuary, 120 km Southwest of Monterey. The seamount is large enough to fit inside the Monterey Bay. The base of the seamount is 3500 m below the surface and stands 2,300 m tall. NOAA's Office of Ocean Exploration funded a

cruise to the Davidson Seamount on the R/V Western Flyer. Partners in this project include MBNMS, NMFS, MLML, MBA, MBARI, and ACT. The objectives of the cruise were to characterize the invertebrates and fish on the seamount, allow public participation through a website, and to assess resource management opportunities. Secondary objectives included geological sampling, seabird and marine mammal observations, obtain genetic sperm whale samples, and surface current mapping. Public outreach was obtained through the well developed website and the media. The seamount was identified as a unique area and potentially fragile by resource managers. Biological characterization, geology samples, and current mapping were all completed successfully. Distinct zonation was observed on the seamount, with white cucumbers being found at the base, and paragorgia corals found along the top ridges.
For more information on the expedition please see:
http://oceanexplorer.noaa.gov/explorations/02davidson/davidson.html

SAC priorities for the MBNMS Management Plan (Sean Morton)

The SAC priorities report was provided to RAP members. There were 12,000 comments received during the Scoping Period for the Management Plan Review. These comments have been broken down into a list of priority issues that the Sanctuary should tackle in the next 5 years. Cross-cutting issues identified include coordinated management, fishing activities, emergency response, cultural resources, ecosystem monitoring, community outreach, and invasive species. Specific issues relating to the MBNMS are partnerships with agencies, water quality, biodiversity protection and ecosystem management, motorized personal watercraft, coastal development, wildlife disturbance, multicultural outreach, and interpretive facilities. At the August SAC meeting the SAC will be asked if the list of priorities is adequate or if something needs to be added or removed. The next step in the process is how to address all of the issues. Working groups will be developed and some RAP members will be asked to participate. These working groups will identify objectives and help develop action plans. For more information please contact Sean Morton (831) 647-4217 or sean.morton@noaa.gov

DISCUSSIONS

Sanctuary Currents Symposium 2003 Theme (Kelly Newton)

Kelly requested ideas for themes for the 2003 Sanctuary Currents Symposium. Past themes included New Technologies, and Fishing for our Future. Kelly will send the RAP an email with a complete list of previous themes. All ideas should be sent to Kelly at Kelly.Newton@noaa.gov

Ecosystem Observations 2002 Article Ideas (Jenny Carless & Liz Love)

Article ideas were being solicited for the 2002 Ecosystem Observations to be available at the 2003 Currents Symposium in March. Ideas included an article on Roger Bland's work at Pioneer Seamount, MERITO, the MLPA process, and an article on the work between the Sanctuary and the Fishermen's Alliance. Any other ideas should be sent to Andrew at andrew.devogelaere@noaa.gov by the end of July.

INFORMATION ITEMS

Community Relation (Rachel Saunders)

Rachel Saunders introduced herself as the new Community Relations person at the Sanctuary. She requested that if RAP members contact her if they have any ideas or comments on enhancing interactions between MBNMS & the community it serves.

Fishermen's Forum Update (Erica Burton)

The Fishermen's Forum took place on March 18-19, 2002 in Watsonville and was attended by fishermen, conservation representatives, Sanctuary Staff, and others. In total there were 176 attendees. The purpose of the forum was to improve communication between all groups regarding marine protected areas. Charlie Wahle of the Marine Protected Areas Center gave a presentation on the overview of MPA's. There were many speakers from all over the country describing the different processes and outcomes of marine protected areas. On the second day breakout groups were formed to discuss several issues. There is a possibility of a future meeting, but no details are available at this time. Erica will be sending, via email, the official summary of the forum.

Fishery Report (Erica Burton)

The report, "Trends in Fisheries and Fishery Resources Associated with the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary from 1981-2000" by Rick Starr, Jason Cope, and Lisa Kerr at Moss Landing Marine Laboratories is now available. This report is an update to the Starr et al 1998 report, "Fishery Resources of the MBNMS." A copy of the report was provided to RAP members in attendance. If you did not receive your copy please contact Erica Burton (831) 647-4246 or erica.burton@noaa.gov

Plume Study of Duke Power Plant Outfall (Jeff Paduan)

A study is currently being conducted that will measure and track the outfall plume of the Duke power plant. Thermister sensors have been placed that will measure the temperature of the plume at 1 ft below the surface, 5 ft below the surface, and 3 ft above the bottom. In August there will be ship surveys and overflights of the area. The data collected will feed into the SIMoN project.

Interim Biogeographic Assessment Report (Erica Burton)

The Interim Biogeographic Assessment was made available for distribution and review. This report was prepared by NOAA's National Centers for Coastal Ocean Science and the National Marine Sanctuary Program, and will be used to support the Joint Management Plan Review. If you would like a copy, or if you have comments on the report please contact Erica Burton (831) 647-4246 or erica.burton@noaa.gov